

## THE EVENING STAR.

WASHINGTON.

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CROSBY S. NOYES.....Editor.

**THE EVENING STAR** has a regular and permanent Family Circulation much more than the combined circulation of the other Washington dailies. As a News and Advertising Medium it has no competitor.

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## The Franchise Tax Movement.

In addressing the New York legislature to explain the reason why he has called it together in extra session so soon after the adjournment, Governor Roosevelt abates nothing from his advanced position with regard to the taxation of public franchises for the use of the streets. He asks for certain amendments to the Ford Bill, now in his hands, for the purpose of making its execution more certain and equitable, but it is clear from his deliberation that he proposes to add to the statutes very soon a measure which recognizes the broad principle of assessing these franchises as really. Should this be done much will have been accomplished toward a readjustment of the relations of the corporations and the people upon fairer lines than have heretofore prevailed. The corporation secures a charter from state or municipal legislature. It proceeds to use the streets and to make money from public patronage. Its taxable property is relatively small, as its principal asset consists of the right to occupy the public space in order to secure patronage and to perform the required service. Without this franchise it could do business.

The proposition to tax the franchises as really stands as a compromise between the prevailing system of non-taxation and the often proposed system of municipal ownership. There are serious doubts as to the entire feasibility of the latter scheme, notwithstanding the obvious public benefits to result from it. Given good government in all departments, it would succeed. But its success clearly depends upon the employment of the proper agents, without reference to their political leanings or services. Until the municipal administration is divorced from party politics and based upon the principles of business all such experiments with the greater enterprises which contribute to the public necessities and comforts, such as the gas, telephone, electric lighting and street railroad concerns, run the risk of failure through the mismanagement which political influences are likely to impose. The chief concern of the people is that these various services be afforded at the lowest rates compatible with the right of the capitalist to make a reasonable profit. If they be well served in fair rates by a private corporation, which pays just dues to the community for privileges enjoyed, there can be no proper complaint. But if, in addition to making a large profit upon the conduct of the business itself, the corporation escapes all liability for the enjoyment of the public spaces through which that business is made possible, the people have a right to demand a new plan of relationships. Governor Roosevelt accurately judges the temper of the citizens in this matter when he says that to pass such reasonable legislation as that in view is to forestall a demand for more radical measures.

## Victoria at Eighty.

When Alexandra Victoria, only child of the Duke of Kent, fourth son of King George III, was born in Kensington Palace May 24, 1819, five persons stood between her and the throne of England, the King, the Prince of Wales and the Dukes of York, Clarence, and Kent. King George died in January, 1820, and the Duke of Kent died at about the same time. The Prince of Wales became George IV, and lived ten years. The Duke of York died in 1827, childless. The Duke of Clarence then became King as William IV, and lived seven years, dying without legitimate issue. The little Princess Victoria, as she had come to be known, was then heir to the throne in the absence of children of the dead King, upon whom the crown could descend. She was then just eighteen and was the first woman to wear England's crown since the death of Anne one hundred and twenty years before.

Victoria is eighty years old today, having reigned for nearly sixty-two years. Elizabeth, England's other great queen, reigned forty-five years. Her period of sovereignty covered many remarkable events and developments, yet that of Victoria, compressing a time of astonishing activity in the world of mechanical advancement as well as of steadfast political development, has far exceeded Elizabeth's reign in the influence which it has wrought upon the world's economies and in the changes which it has witnessed in the progression of man toward more complete civilization. The purity of Victoria's life, and the loftiness of her principles may insured her hold upon the esteem and affections of her people. Through long past the time when she can take an active part in the affairs of state and bound by the constitutional limitations and by the prevailing political customs to a minimum of activity in any event, she has exerted a wholesome influence at all times upon the concerns of the empire. Victoria's name is certain to be written high among the world's sovereigns in years to come as a ruler whose gentle, home-loving, peace-loving traits insinuated a new spirit into the British public life, and by its influence unquestionably redounded to England's betterment.

Two Frenchmen fought a duel as the result of a quarrel over the question whether Hamlet was fat or lean. They might have effected a compromise by allowing Hamlet to start in the first act, as a fat man and letting him gradually grow thin, owing to his worry over family affairs.

## Alexandria County's Election.

The people of Alexandria county, Va., tomorrow elect county officers for a term of four years. There are about 1,500 registered voters, and the canvass is bitterly active. The issues are sharply drawn between the law-and-order elements on the one side and the gambling fraternity and allied interests on the other. Political considerations are commingled to the confusion of the case, yet the fact stands out clearly that if the present ticket should be re-elected the county can look forward to no change in the methods of local administration, which have continued the conditions which a few years ago caused the people of this city to enter complaint with the governor of the state.

The candidates put forward by the good government people, opposed to the continuation of the gambling enterprises, are pledged to reform. Their candidate for the office of commonwealth's attorney was defeated at the election four years ago for the same office by less than sixty votes. Since then there has been a new registration, which it is believed, has resulted in the disfranchisement of many of the gamblers' votes by drawing a stricter line around the citizenship. Thus the chances are thought to be more favorable to a reform victory than they were in 1895.

The capital extends good wishes for success to those citizens of the county who are striving to rid the little organization of the immoral communities which have

thirteen at this city's doors. Washington can do little save in the encouragement of all the local efforts to cleanse the country. The river draws a legal line to prevent interference from this side, except so far as the criminal classes clustering in the shelter of Alexandria county commit depredations on this side.

The moral issue at stake is material. The influence of these gambling hells on the Virginia side upon the young men of this community is deplorably bad. The convenience of access, the practical immunity from arrest, the variety of modes of breaking the law all allure the morally weak. The case would receive the most radical treatment if it lay within the range of the District's jurisdiction.

The small size and poverty of the county make it a fine field for the gamblers, who have thriven there as in few other places in this country. But with determined officials in charge of the processes of the law there should be little difficulty in cleaning out the place. The violations of law are flagrant and open. There has been the merest pretense of enforcing the state's statutes. Apparently the state officials can do nothing to prevent a continuation of the evils, for the county has declined to acknowledge its inability to cope with the situation. In this predicament it is earnestly to be hoped that tomorrow's election will break the power of the evil doers in the county and place the means of administration in the hands of those who are believed to be honest in favor of reform.

## The Maryland Democracy.

Will the democratic state convention to be held in Maryland this year endorse the Chicago platform? And if it does, will the sound money democrats support the ticket? And if it does not; if the money question is ignored or evaded, will the Bryanites support the ticket with anything like enthusiasm?

The Bryanites at a distance are curious on the subject. George Fred Williams of Massachusetts has written to the Maryland Democratic Association for information. Like every other devoted follower of the Nebraska leader, he lacks confidence in Mr. Gorman. He recognizes the influence of Mr. Gorman in Maryland affairs, and the fact that that influence is not friendly to Mr. Bryan. In a recent letter to the political organization in question Mr. Williams is quoted as saying:

"Dear me!" exclaimed the Filipino warrior's wife. "The Tarlac dry goods emporium is advertising an immense bargain sale of white cotton handkerchiefs."

"Go and get a few dozen at once," was the answer. "They'll make first rate flags of truce."

## Greatly Pleased.

"I wouldn't have missed it for anything," exclaimed young Mrs. Torkins, who had attended a game which the home team lost.

"Do you know which side won?" asked her husband patiently.

"Why—not, Charley dear, not exactly.

But what I liked was the way in which the crowd kept quiet. There was none of that shouting to disturb the players. It was one of the best behaved audiences I ever saw."

## More "Queen's Birthday Poetry."

Now, poets, play your rhymes intense!

If some are wrongly read

In quest of an imperfection,

Why, "honest swot qui mally pens."

Is all that need be said?

Oh, twang the lyre in tender key!

Awake the starry spheres

To celebrate the queen, for she,

As amiable as queen could be,

Has lived just eighty years.

We love her condescending ways.

The muse they must invoke

To dulce eulogistic phrase.

She delighted to breathe through all these days

Like ordinary folk.

No interference impolite

She brought to public view.

She ran the government aright.

She let her great men think and fight

As they were paid to do.

The people's ways she made her own.

A simple life she led.

Sometimes she sat upon the throne;

And when she tired of that, 'ts known

That she would go to bed.

A lady true of noblest birth,

Hers is a glorious lot.

Her praise is heard o'er all the earth,

For Tommy Atkins tells her worth,

And likebly Tommy Rotte.

## The Family Paper of the Capital.

From the New Britain (Conn.) Herald.

The Washington Star is to have a magnificent new building. The Star is one of the institutions of Washington. It is the family paper of the capital city and its growth has been phenomenal. It has earned its good fortune by being, at all times, a progressive and enterprising newspaper.

Those Cruelty Stories.

From the Milwaukee Sentinel.

For some time the anti-imperialist newspapers have been publishing extracts from letters of private soldiers in the Philippines, letters in which it is said that the American soldiers take no prisoners, but shoot even those natives who are willing to surrender; that robbery, torture and rape are common; that American officers have ordered the killing of women and children. We do not know whether readers of these anti-imperialist newspapers believe such stories, or whether the evidence is reliable. It is certain that the very great majority of Americans regard them as lies, and do not trouble their heads about them.

It is doubted whether the peace conference will ever get so far along in its operations as the pacification of Prof. Von Stengel.

President Kruger will doubtless sympathize with Gov. Roosevelt, as he also has a few franchise troubles.

## A New Fashion in French Duels.

Despite its serious ending, the latest French duel is a record breaker for ludicrous features. Its cause was sufficiently ridiculous to set the world laughing. The issue whether Hamlet was fat or lean could not possibly in any other country than France provoke men to the point of a duel. Long ere the crisis was reached the antagonists would see the absurdity of the capacity for repeating this operation was then made apparent, and this is all that is implied in our military operations in the Island of Luzon.

## It Was Stopped, However.

From the Memphis Commercial Appeal.

An effort was made in Washington, D. C., to lynch a negro murderer the other day, and it was narrowly averted by the promptness of the police.

## Bound to Be a Success.

From the Louisville Courier-Journal.

Emperor Bill has produced his play. He also produced the audience; and if there are those who should intimate that the play was not a success he is ready to produce a jail.

## Never a Noiseless Fourth.

From the Philadelphia Telegraph.

A noiseless Fourth! Now, see here, isn't this carrying the automobile noise a little too far? How can the Fourth go without a noise? The suggestion of the World's Unity Peace League is enough to make the average small boy an attack of the worst thing that could happen to him.

## Should See the Difference.

From the Chicago Tribune.

Ex-Governor Boutwell at the Anti-imperial League's meeting at Boston remarked: "As between Aguinaldo and the President, Aguinaldo is in the right and the President is in the wrong." Under Aguinaldo's sway who would make a similar remark declaring the President right and Aguinaldo wrong would not live to talk another day. Even Mr. Boutwell ought to be able to appreciate this difference between the two.

ing and believing to find him slightly wounded, but found that they had been deceived by the labored breathing caused by his corpulence and years. Whenever the rappers touched the ground time was called to permit the blades to be passed through an alcohol flame to kill any chance bacteria that might have lodged upon them. The antiseptic duel may be a social feature of the next century.

The effort to establish a Sunday newspaper in London has been abandoned. After reading the ordinary London paper six days in the week the public is surely entitled to a rest.

Spain has not the sporting blood to suggest that the battle of Santiago be fought over again so as to give Mr. Schley and Mr. Sampson a chance to show which is the better officer.

It should not be necessary for Mr. Dewey to repeatedly remind the public that fun and excitement are not what a man in his position needs.

In conducting any peace negotiations with Gen. Otis, Aguinaldo will have to turn his attention to burning his bridges.

## SHOOTING STARS.

Vindictive.

"If you are so indignant, why don't you challenge him to a duel?" asked one Frenchman.

And share the benefits of the advertisement with him?" exclaimed the other. "No, sir. I hate him too much."

## AN IMPRESSION.

"Hello," said Chilly Anglomanie. "It's raining in London!"

"Well," answered the man who dislikes punctuary poetry on royal occasions. "It's been pretty sultry over there for a good while."

## ASSURANCE.

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## SEIZING AN OPPORTUNITY.

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